

STRONG PARKS, STRONG COMMUNITIES

Tool 7: Culture of Philanthropy

When organizations talk about having a “culture of philanthropy,” they are not just talking about how board members give personally to the organization, or that a few board leaders are comfortable soliciting donors. They are talking about a deeply ingrained attitude toward the nexus of mission and money. Here is what it looks like.

CHARACTERISTIC

THIS MEANS

Confidence

You are not embarrassed about fundraising. You view money as fundamental to your organization’s ability to accomplish great things.

Impact-seeking

It is not really about money, it is about impact. Money is just the tool that leads to results.

Mission-driven

Your organization has articulated philanthropy’s role in advancing the mission.

Relational

You love donors: you are interested in a relationship, not a transaction. People are not simply “checkbooks” – they also have ideas and have a personal interest in investing in your success.

Donor-based

You see donors as part of your mission, and essential partners in your work.

Leadership-driven

Everyone in the organization is a “philanthropy facilitator” – playing an active role in connecting donors with your mission – but the board and executive director lead from the top.

Customer service oriented

Your approach is characterized by a desire to provide good customer service.

Grateful

You genuinely appreciate the partnership and support of your donors.

What would it take for your organization to evolve toward a culture of philanthropy?